



## United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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### **USET Resolution No. 2015:039**

#### **OPPOSITION TO THE PASSAGE OF ALABAMA HOUSE BILL 584 AND SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE ALABAMA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

- WHEREAS,** United South and Eastern Tribes, Incorporated (USET) is an intertribal organization comprised of twenty-six (26) federally recognized Tribes; and
- WHEREAS,** the actions taken by the USET Board of Directors officially represent the intentions of each member Tribe, as the Board of Directors comprises delegates from the member Tribes' leadership; and
- WHEREAS,** the responsibility for protection and preservation of Alabama's historical sites and archeological assets are currently held by the Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) which includes the offices of the Alabama State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Alabama State Archeologist, and other preservation staff; and
- WHEREAS,** Alabama House Bill (HB) 584, was introduced into the legislative process of the State of Alabama on April 30, 2015, passage of which would dismantle the AHC and divide its assets, functions, and commitments between the Alabama Department of Archives and History and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; and
- WHEREAS,** neither the effected agencies, nor any stakeholder organizations, nor Tribal Nations with cultural affiliations to Alabama, were consulted in the development of this legislation; and
- WHEREAS,** upon passage of HB 584, the AHC would not only cease to exist, but three of its sites of historical significance to American Indians: Fort Toulouse/Jackson Park, Fort Morgan, and Old Cahaba, would be transferred to the Conservation Department of Alabama; and
- WHEREAS,** HB 584 fails to address the fate of the AHC extensive archaeological collections which currently number nearly 2.6 million items, among these materials, are items critical for the continuing study of American Indian culture; and
- WHEREAS,** passage of HB 584 would essentially separate major historical sites and collections from the Alabama SHPO and Alabama State Archeologist, thereby divorcing the state's historic assets from the professional expertise and authority needed to protect them; and
- WHEREAS,** in December 2010, the United States recognized the rights of its First Peoples through its support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), whose provisions and principles support and promote the purposes of this resolution; therefore, be it

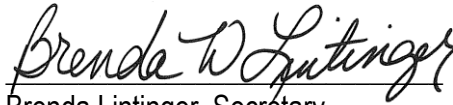
**RESOLVED** the USET Board of Directors strongly opposes the provisions and passage of Alabama House Bill 584, which threatens the preservation of historic sites and archeological collections important to American Indians, and supports the continued existence and valuable work of the Alabama Historical Commission

**CERTIFICATION**

This resolution was duly passed at the USET Semi-Annual Meeting, at which a quorum was present, in Mashantucket, CT, May 20, 2015.



Brian Patterson, President  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.



Brenda Lintinger, Secretary  
United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

*“Because there is strength in Unity”*